

School of Theology at Claremont



1001 1373208

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

AND THE

SOCIAL REVOLUTION

HX
51
B56

G. CLIVE BINYON



The Library
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT CLAREMONT

WEST FOOTHILL AT COLLEGE AVENUE
CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION

HX
51
B56

BY THE REV.

GILBERT CLIVE BINYON, M.A.

AUTHOR OF

"PRAYERS FOR THE CITY OF GOD," ETC.

LONDON
SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING
CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE
NEW YORK: THE MACMILLAN CO.

1921

Theology Library
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT CLAREMONT
California

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

PRAYERS FOR THE CITY OF GOD

A Book of Devotions. Containing Prayers for personal use ; Devotions at Holy Communion ; Intercessions, etc.

Third Edition.

LONGMANS, GREEN & CO. 4s. 6d.

THE KINGDOM OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

CONTENTS : The Incarnation and the Coming of the Kingdom—The Kingdom of Christ—Atonement ; Justification by Faith, and Social Justice—Fact and Faith—Sin and Sociology—Original Sin and Baptism—The Church and the World.

C. W. BAYLIS, Vale of Evesham Press, Evesham.

3s. 9d., post free.

SOCIALIST PRAYERS

A Card of Prayers, for the use of Socialists.

HALL, THE PRINTER, Queen St., Oxford. 1d. each.

INTRODUCTION

THE general thesis of this volume may be stated very shortly and simply. It is that the Christian Church is really committed to a social idealism for the future of humanity; that for various reasons this has very largely been lost sight of; that the International Socialist Movement is, sometimes implicitly and unconsciously, sometimes explicitly and consciously, based upon moral principle and social idealism practically identical with that to which the Church is committed; that, through a recognition of this, the way is opened for a recovery by the Church of its true social principle; and, finally, that any such adoption of Socialist ideas will necessitate a certain revision in a good deal of popular theology.

No doubt there are a good many people to whom the above would appear more than a little startling and almost incredible as a seriously meant statement; yet the following quotations show that it is by no means so remote from reality as some would think. They reveal, it may be, a situation which is somewhat disheartening from the writer's standpoint; at the same time, they

show the existence of a certain body of opinion sympathetic with the above ideas.

“ On Sunday night, Dr. Horton lectured in his church to a large audience on ‘ Capital in the Light of Jesus Christ.’ . . . At the end we had the joyous surprise of a quotation from Bruce Glasier’s declaration: ‘ Socialism consists, in truth, when finally resolved, not in getting at all, but in giving; not in being served, but in serving; not in selfishness, but in unselfishness; not in the desire to gain a place of bliss in this world for one’s self and one’s family (that is the individualist and capitalist aim), but in the desire to create an earthly paradise for all.’ ‘ That ! ’ cried Dr. Horton, passionately, ‘ is Christianity ! Why use this word “ Socialism ” ? ’ he demanded.”—*The Crusader*, March 12, 1920.

“ Let Dr. Horton quote the words of Bruce Glasier to a Labour audience and declare, ‘ That is Christianity ! ’ He will get his answer clear and straight from the outraged souls of men: ‘ That is not the Christianity you and your churches have been preaching ! ’ ”—*The Crusader*, March 19, 1920.

How far the passage quoted from Mr. Bruce Glasier’s book may be taken as an adequate description either of Christianity or of Socialism, we need not here enquire; that it indicates the nature of the element common to both is indisputable—if, that is, there is any common element at all; and those who maintain that there is none will probably not read these pages.

But if there is any truth in the idea that Christianity and Socialism meet on a common ground

of moral idealism, then it is an extraordinary thing that the Church and the Socialist Movement should be so far apart as (for the most part) they are; it is a circumstance, not merely extraordinary, but pathetic and lamentable; it is one in which Christian people could not acquiesce.

“The Social Revolution,” however, is a phrase which recalls all those features of Socialist thought and action which might be held to account for and to justify the alienation of the two bodies of adherents. The sense in which the phrase is used in the title of this book must, therefore, be explained. It does not refer to unconstitutional as distinguished from constitutional action, nor to methods of violence as distinguished from peaceful methods, nor to sudden and rapid changes in society as distinguished from changes duly prepared for and carried out with all proper deference to people’s traditions and habits. Action which is unconstitutional, violent, sudden, and rapid, may, indeed, be revolutionary; but if so, it is not because of these characteristics; in virtue of these it should be called “catastrophic.” If it has a revolutionary nature it is because it is based on principles which are contrary to those on which the hitherto existing society has been based, and aims at ideals opposite to those which have previously been adopted; and if it resorts to catastrophic methods, it is out of no love for them as such, but owing to an impatience provoked by opposition. As thus explained, the word “revolution” calls attention to the contrasted principles and

social philosophy of the Socialist Movement—to its conceptions of co-operation and public service, which it opposes to those of competition and private gain; it is, therefore, one peculiarly appropriate for us to use, if we see in Socialism the emergence of a moral ideal which is essentially Christian, but which the Church has to a large extent lost sight of.

It is the writer's hope that these pages may contribute, in however slight a degree, to a recovery by Christian people of that social idealism which is (as he believes) at the back of the Social Revolution and also contained in the Christian Faith.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE IDEALIST AND MORAL BASIS OF SOCIALISM	- 1
II. THE SOCIAL IDEALISM OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH	- 19
III. CHRISTIANITY AND THE "CLASS WAR" IDEA IN SOCIALISM - - - - -	- 31
IV. CHRISTIANITY AND FORMAL ATHEISM IN SOCIALISM	- 47
V. LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE - - - - -	- 74

Parts of this work have already appeared in the
Constructive Quarterly, the *Church Socialist*, and
the *Commonwealth*.

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION

CHAPTER I

THE IDEALIST AND MORAL BASIS OF SOCIALISM

§ 1.

To an increasing number of Christian people in this country, not only within the Church of England, but among all denominations, it is becoming more and more clear that questions as to political and industrial organization must be considered in the light of the Christian religion. There is a growing body of people who are uneasy in their consciences about these matters, and are wondering whether what has hitherto been called Christian Civilization is at all worthy of that description, what a really Christian Civilization would be like, and what should be done.

These are, of course, no new ideas.

It has constantly been urged by a good many people that conditions of life among the poor are so bad that until they have a better environment they are unable, or cannot reasonably be expected, to develop their religious faculties or to live, in any full sense, a real human life. On these grounds

an extremely strong case for drastic changes in the social order has been made out.

But it has constantly happened that the edge of the argument, when addressed to Christians, has become turned by more than one consideration. The appeal is made in the name of religion, yet precisely for reasons drawn from religion the appeal falls flat.

For there are souls to whom any serious concern with social problems, and still more any sort of "Christian Socialism," seems like an inroad of worldliness, a secularization of religion, a lapse from spirituality. "Is there not," it is asked, "a determinist assumption in this emphasis on material circumstances? Cannot the grace of God triumph over any influences of secular environment? Does an improvement in outward conditions ensure, or even always favour, a corresponding improvement in character?" The whole point of view that they are asked to adopt is unfamiliar and unacceptable; "character," it is urged, "is the only thing that really matters and that has an eternal value; the supreme experiences of the soul, conviction of sin, fear of judgment to come, repentance, forgiveness, the joy of a new-found faith and of communion with God—these spiritual facts, by their overwhelming and transcendent importance, dwarf into complete insignificance an interest in social questions, while any alliance with the revolutionary Socialists, who are secularists, is quite unthinkable." Some might go on to quote a sentence from Newman's *Apologia*: "The

Catholic Church holds it better for the sun and moon to drop from heaven, for the earth to fail, and for all the many millions on it to die of starvation in extremest agony as far as temporal affliction goes, than that one soul, I will not say should be lost, but should commit one single venial sin."

If Newman here expresses the authentic note of truly spiritual religion, then (so at least many will feel) Social Democracy must of necessity be the implacable foe of all religion. Exactly this opinion is, of course, widely held throughout the Continent of Europe. To the Christian, Socialism spells Secularism; to the Socialist, Religion spells Reaction.

But an indifference, in the name of spiritual religion, to the whole range of social problems and to Socialist aspiration assumes, we must notice, that all such concerns are, if not just a fad, sufficiently described as political or economic, and do not fall within the scope of moral interest; they are assumed to be secular matters, of negligible importance compared with the salvation of souls. Thus, naturally, an antagonism arises, in people's minds, between the reform, reconstruction, or revolutionizing of society, and the cultivation of spiritual religion. It is thought, on the one side, that we ought to attend to our eternal welfare and to that of others, instead of being distracted by those enterprises in the world which are secular because they take no account of transcendent reality and are delusive because they ignore the sinfulness of human nature. It is thought, on the

other side, that while humanity is distressed by temporal afflictions, and while Socialists are heroically struggling to secure better lives for all and to establish the reign of liberty, equality, and fraternity, Christians, if they are not absorbed with saving souls—their own and others',—either as Catholics by the accumulation of “merit,” or as Protestants by something they call “faith,” can only initiate forms of social service expressly designed, not to assist, but to counteract Social Democracy with its irreligious and revolutionary tendencies.

But spiritual religion, even as expressed in the quotation from Newman, has no necessary connection with an individualistic desire to be saved or with an indifference to man's temporal afflictions. Nor has Social Democracy any necessary connection with a materialistic contempt for any thought of spirituality, transcendence, and eternity. The Christian Religion contains, and Socialism depends upon, a moral enthusiasm.

At this point some readers may be anxious to protest that any sort of idealism which there may be among Socialists is by no means the same as that of Christianity, and is, in fact, essentially different.

Thus we are faced, at the outset, with quite fundamental questions. Is the Socialist Movement really inspired by a moral enthusiasm? And if so, is it the same as the social idealism of Christianity? In fact, is any kind of social idealism an integral part of the Christian Faith, or is it something

which may be added to it while not being essential ?

These questions are evidently of the utmost importance in any serious consideration of the whole subject. Until they are faced and answered, all discussion and controversy must be extremely confused and confusing.

Our starting-point, then, will be a consideration of the moral principles and basis of Socialism, and how far they resemble or differ from the social idealism of Christianity.

§ 2.

To take first the moral basis of Socialism.

If we wish to arrive at clear ideas on this subject, we can hardly do better than begin by asking how it is that some Socialists say that Socialism has no moral basis, and dismiss any reference to abstract moral principle as "unscientific Utopianism," substituting for this the theory of Economic Determinism.

One reason is, surely, to be found in the fact that these thinkers take it for granted that there can be no Socialism without Socialists; so much so, in fact, that it does not seem necessary to dwell on the conversion of individuals to Socialist principles. Adoption of these principles and adherence to them is the basic presupposition so obviously necessary as not to need mention. The moral principle, though formally denied, is really tacitly assumed.

Another reason is that a certain estrangement

often grows up between moral enthusiasts and those Socialists who are busy grappling with the actual problems of the day. These latter, for the sake of effective work, must necessarily adjust themselves to the actual situation; but what the former most prize is a detachment from the present-day world. It is the old question of the relation of the soul to the body, of faith to works, of the spirit to the letter. This familiar question, at once fascinating and exasperating; is always troublesome. Even in matters in which Christian people have had centuries of experience, such as, for instance, fasting or Sunday observance, can it be claimed that we have universally attained to the true knowledge of the relation between the spirit and the letter? Is there not a tendency for the two to draw apart? The moral basis and idealism of the Socialist Movement and the detailed programme and step-by-step advance to its realization may be thought of as related to one another in the same way as soul and body. As in these other instances, they sometimes draw apart from one another. Socialism, be it remembered, has to do with all the immense complexities of the modern world, with political, international, and racial complications superimposed upon industrial organization; it is concerned, not only with the behaviour of individuals within the existing forms of society, but with those forms themselves: these latter create the political, economic, and even the psychological conditions of the advance towards Socialism. All these circumstances make a drawing

apart of the idealist basis and the practical working out almost inevitable. Thus it sometimes happens that when we look for the soul of Socialism we find a spirit which is too much given to dreams and visions to be very helpful practically; the moral element in Socialism tends, in short, to develop in a Utopian manner—that is to say, with no reference at all to the past and but little to the present. Naturally, therefore, this side of the matter is apt to be neglected by some.

Again, it is constantly assumed by religious people that, granted universal goodwill, all social questions disappear, and so, instead of discussing them, they talk about character. But this assumption is not true. How can a large factory be run without management? How can the whole of productive industry be carried on without organization? Systems of management and forms of organization have to be considered, however well disposed people may be, however much they may be penetrated by the spirit of brotherhood and mutual service. In any case, therefore, these subjects must be discussed. The need for a high standard of character and the necessity for loyalty to moral principles are great truths; but a recognition of these truths is no substitute for work at the practical problems of everyday life; and when they are put forward as furnishing by themselves the true and sufficient solution of all questions, it is natural that some impatience should be felt.

Moreover—and this point needs particular attention—"character" is a word which in itself does

not necessarily imply any particular type of character. When, then, the importance of character is pressed upon the attention of Socialists by those who are not themselves Socialists and who show no great signs of being opposed to Capitalism with its competition and exploitation, Socialists may be excused, I think, if they pay but little attention. The fact is that many of those who stress the moral factor can think of no more far-reaching opposition to the world as it is than is involved in campaigns against betting, drink, and other vices, against flagrant instances of downright sweating, the worst features of the housing of the poor, and other matters that call for reform. But all this, however admirable it may be, leaves Capitalism intact. The moral factor of character is, beyond question, essential for the progress and success of the Socialist Movement; it can make no headway without a steadfast adherence to that social idealism which it opposes to the capitalist world. But it is not always a social idealism of this kind which is displayed by those who press upon Socialists the importance of character. Hence the impatience and resentment, amounting in some cases to a formal repudiation of any reference to moral principle.

Yet the moral basis, in spite of all, is never really abandoned. It is tacitly assumed—even though denied, for reasons we have noticed—even by those who speak of Economic Determinism and the materialist interpretation of history.

By way of summary description of this moral

basis, we may make use of several phrases. We may speak of the principle of co-operation as opposed to that of competition. "Anyone," wrote F. D. Maurice, "who recognizes the principle of co-operation as a stronger and truer principle than that of competition, has a right to the honour or the disgrace of being called a Socialist." Or we may make use of the phrases adopted by H. G. Wells in *New Worlds for Old*, and speak of the spirit of service as distinguished from the spirit of gain. Or we may think of the Socialist ideal in the language of the Socialist Sunday Schools, as "The City which has Justice for its foundation and Love for its law." Or we may use the well-worn threefold phrase—Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. Or, finally, we may think of the dependence of man for the means of life upon nature, and find in the Motherhood of Earth the suggestion of a human brotherhood wherein each contributes according to his powers and receives according to his needs.

§ 3.

The use of the above or similar phrases and expressions is not limited to Socialists. They are employed often enough by reformers of all sorts. Yet they may properly be taken to express the moral basis and principles of Socialism; and though they may be used by others, it is Socialists who hold the key to their actual realization.

The programme of this realization, in so far as it falls within the scope of these pages at all, must

be considered at a later point. Here we are concerned simply with the principles and ideas in quite general terms.

But since there is often a good deal of confusion between Socialism and Anarchism and Communism, and as to the various descriptions of Socialism as Utopian, Scientific, Revolutionary, and Evolutionary, it may be well to clear the ground by a consideration of their mutual relations and differences.

We may begin by noticing, first, that there are those who are opposed to the industrial revolution altogether. Sometimes they have failed to hear of, or to imagine, any but a commercial basis for it. Sometimes they believe that, no matter how organized, a society which makes use of machines and factories, motors and tubes, and the whole apparatus of our present industrial and social life, is unnatural, militates against æstheticism, and generally degrades humanity. These persons, for one or other of these reasons, include in one sweeping indiscriminate condemnation the whole of modern civilization; they idealize the Simple Life. This view still survives in some quarters in the industrialized countries, and appears to have become almost an article of faith in the minds of some Indian Nationalists.

There are, next, those who, seeing that law and government are for the restraint of evil-doers, look forward to a time when human progress shall have attained its destination and any occasion for restraint or coercion shall have passed away.

This Utopianism finds a fragmentary realization, by anticipation, in the lives of Tolstoyans.

Lastly, there are those who, impatient with the slowness of progress, and brought to a state of desperation about constitutional and peaceful methods, resort either to what is sometimes known as the "informal execution" of individuals or to an insurrectionism on a larger scale.

The essence of Anarchism is the negation of government, and the essence of Communism is the negation of private property.

Since agriculture and the petty industries require but little organization, it is clear that Anarchism may be associated, as in fact it has been, with the Simple Life ideal, as well as with the ideal of the ultimate Utopia. It is also plain that the idealistic, anticipatory, impatient temperament may quite as easily result in insurrectionary methods as in passive resistance. These methods, however, with which the word Anarchism in many people's minds is exclusively associated, are, when adopted, not necessarily or even usually connected with any idea of Anarchism as the ideal form of society.

Equally confusing is the use of the word Communism. Obviously Communism might conceivably be applied in any community, whether of the simple-life agricultural sort or whether organized on the basis of large-scale industry; but, no less obviously, it becomes more and more Utopian as the community increases in size and complexity.

How does Socialism stand with reference to these ideas ?

I think that the tendency of the Socialist spirit may very appropriately be described in the following phrase: A continuous approximation towards Communistic Anarchism. In other words, in so far as the Socialist Movement sets its face towards Utopia and contemplates an indefinite progress towards the perfection of humanity, it may be said to be allied to Anarchism; while in so far as it adopts the principle of supplying the consumer free of charge (as is done in the case of roads, public elementary schools, and drinking-fountains), it may be said to be allied to Communism. To maintain in this way the idea of Communistic Anarchism as the ultimate Utopian goal of the Socialist Movement serves the purpose of distinguishing Collectivist Socialism from non-Socialist Collectivism; it calls attention to the idealist and moral impulse of Socialist Collectivism, which, though it does not negate the ideas of government and private property, transforms the one into the management of industry and the other into the appropriation of a share of the product.

But it is also important to notice the distinction between Socialism and Anarchism or Communism, and even to emphasize this distinction. The limitation of Socialism to ultimate ideals, unrealizable within any period at all in sight, and the confusion of it with insurrectionism, are alike a source both of internal weakness and external offence.

The relation of Socialism to the Simple Life idea needs further treatment.

It is not merely a sentimental attachment to the old-fashioned way of living, nor the love of a free-and-easy outdoor fresh-air life, nor the pride of skilled craftsmanship, that gives continued vitality to the Simple Life point of view. There is more in it than that. In his book *The Indian Craftsman*, Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy writes as follows: "The craftsman is not an individual expressing individual whims, but a part of the universe, giving expression to ideals of eternal beauty and unchanging laws, even as do the trees and flowers whose natural and less ordered beauty is no less God-given." Here, perhaps, we may find the essential spirit of this point of view; it is a spirit of dependence upon Nature, a sense that all human labour is a continuation, or even a part, of the energy of the processes of Nature; a sense of the sacredness of human creative power, a belief that to pervert it to unworthy or anti-social or selfish ends is to violate personality.

Viewed in this way, the spirit of the Simple Life idea is very closely akin to the true spirit of Socialism: for, if we wish for phrases in which to sum up the whole of Socialism we may find them in that of Saint-Simon: "The exploitation of the globe by men associated to men," amplified by the formulas, "From each according to his powers, to each according to his needs." This envisaging of industry against the background of the resources of the globe, as standing between the supplies of

Nature and the needs of men, suggests the idea of Mother Earth and her gifts and their enjoyment by the sons of men, an idea which is obviously akin to the thought of the quotation just given. In the Socialist view, the industrial revolution provides a means both of increasing the amount of available resources and of decreasing the amount of necessary labour. Mines, factories, railways, steamships—these may bring in more stages in the process, but by so doing they might enlarge the extent of our conscious unity with the rest of mankind; they might, in fact, tend towards creating a sense of world-wide fraternity; and one of the objects of the Socialist plan of substituting, in place of competitive production for profit, co-operative production for use may be said to be precisely such a transformation of industry as may cause it to express and foster, instead of obliterating, this consciousness of common dependence upon Nature and upon one another's labour.

The earliest Socialism is always Utopian, that is to say, is based on abstract moral principles without reference to the past or present. This is true, not only in the history of the Socialist Movement as a whole, but also in the experience of individual Socialists in successive generations.

Utopian Socialism is not very clearly distinguished from Anarchism and Communism, and is liable to be entangled with the Simple Life idea. It looks forward, more or less definitely, to a catastrophic inauguration of Socialism "after the

revolution," which is thought of as about to occur at any time, either in the manner of the French Revolution or through a widespread simultaneous conversion of all classes; or else it looks to what Karl Marx once called "duodecimo editions of the New Jerusalem," ideal commonwealths to be founded and lived in by refugees from the world of Mammon.

Those who take up with these ideas, as a rule, soon tire of them, or suffer an intolerable disillusionment without being able to abandon their idealism; it is not until a scientific spirit enters into Socialism that it becomes possible to retain idealism while shedding illusions. For it is a scientific spirit that brings Socialist idealism into fruitful relations with the past and the present, which unscientific Utopianism ignores.

A view which was scientific without being also socialist would investigate what is; note and describe tendencies, causes, and effects; later, it might venture on prediction. It would introduce us to a determinist world, where everything was of equal value, and of which we might say, indifferently, that it is all good or all bad. But a view which is at once scientific and socialist recognizes that the whole past, what was wrong as well as what was right, has really happened and has produced consequences in the present; yet, with all this, it holds fast to moral principle.

Scientific Socialism, in so far as it is scientific, adapts itself to circumstances; in so far as it is socialist, it adapts circumstances to itself; it seeks

a knowledge of the facts in order to gain the power effectively to mould them.

This scientific spirit is somewhat elusive; and there is a constant tendency to fall away from it, in one direction or the other.

Those who have drunk deeply of the Utopian spirit often find something hateful in the scientific method. The slow investigation of facts, the gradual discovery of causes and effects, the distinction between what might be ideally right and what is actually practicable, the choice of the latter as the basis of practical action, the suppression of arguments that might give offence—all these things appear as unworthy concessions and compromise. Far too much attention, it seems, is paid to what is, not nearly enough to what ought to be; the whole point of view rouses a sort of furious impatience or contempt. This may lead to a relapse into Anarchism in one of its two forms, passive resistance or violence.

Others become associated with the Socialist Movement without ever having passed through the Utopian stage; they are impatient of Utopias; they know the facts; they know, too, that material improvement can be made if people will patiently set to work; and to this work of immediately practicable changes they devote themselves; the ultimate goal, even the distant future, they dismiss from their minds as being too far ahead to look forward to. In this way Socialism comes to give place to non- or even anti-Socialist social reform and betterment.

The real point of view of scientific Socialism consists in a recognition of the facts, combined with an adherence to principle; it envisages the social order, not as static, but as dynamic; as being, at any given moment, a phase in a continuous process of social change wherein one stage follows another by natural sequence; it sees in this ordered development the conditions within which the deliberate change introduced by Socialists has to move.

It is an emphasis, now on the Utopian, idealist, moral side, now on what is immediately practicable under the conditions of the present, that produces what are called, respectively, Revolutionary and Evolutionary Socialism.

These two seem sometimes to be contrasted with a view to dismissing the former as self-condemned by its name and then explaining that evolutionary means gradual and that gradual means slow, and in fact that nothing very much need be done just yet. But the idea that Revolutionary Socialism stands condemned by being revolutionary depends upon a confusion of revolution with insurrectionary methods, and with an impetuous action which outruns the progress of the conversion of the people generally to Socialist principles; this sort of thing should be called catastrophic or convulsionary.

If we distinguish Revolutionary and Evolutionary Socialism by the emphasis laid upon the moral ideal and on the limitations imposed by circumstances, then we may find the character-

istically revolutionary action to consist in propaganda and the effort to capture political power, and the characteristically evolutionary action to consist in working at what is immediately practicable.

This distinction tends to disappear when it is recognized that man is not only very largely influenced and limited by his environment, but also able to defy his environment, and by spiritual and moral force break through customs and traditions. Those who are building "the City which has Justice for its foundation and Love for its law" are dealing, not with bricks and mortar and other substances the behaviour of which can be accurately known beforehand, but with flesh and blood, with human nature; no one can tell, at any given moment, how far or how soon a different spirit may or may not come to prevail; and though this incalculable element may bring delays, disappointments, and despair, it may also bring success and achievement beyond all hoping.

CHAPTER II

THE SOCIAL IDEALISM OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

§ 1.

THE moral basis of Socialism, then, we take to be the ideal conception of a "city" or world-civilization which has Justice for its foundation and Love for its law, wherein are realized the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity, and where each contributes according to his powers and receives according to his needs.

How far, we must now enquire, can this be identified with the social idealism, if any, to which the Christian Church is committed?

Of the Christian Bible, the greater part consists of the Old Testament, a fact which reminds us that the Christian Revelation came as the crown and fulfilment of the aspirations of a people, that the Incarnation was the Divine answer to Israel's Messianic Hope.

In studying the books of the Old Testament we need constantly to remember that everything is dominated by this thought of the Messianic Age, of a kingdom of righteousness in the future. The apprehension of God in the souls of the true Israelites stimulated them to hope and endeavour for the outward manifestation of His righteousness in social life. This spirit and outlook is apparent to every reader of the prophets and psalms.

There is a complete absence of individualism; the whole outlook is national, communal, and social. Over against the actual society in which they live, prophet and psalmist see the vision of what it might be and should be according to the will of the Lord; their consciousness of God enables them to see what is wrong with the world. The essential wrongness of society they find manifested in the existence of oppression and poverty. "In the Bible," it has been said, "the fact of the difference between rich and poor is not a mere example, a mere touch—one thing among many with which God is displeased. Nay, that difference between the rich and the poor is the very poison, the very wound, the very disgrace from which we suffer. All through the Old Testament there goes that cry: God has taken upon Him the cause of the poor and the oppressed. That is the essence of sin, the making of rich and poor."

The reader is invited to look through the Psalter, and to notice how often the word "poor" occurs, and to notice also that in nearly all cases it is the poor who speak, who utter their complaint to God against the oppression of the ungodly rich. (What a remarkable difference there is, by the way, between this and modern religious literature which nearly always speaks of "our" duty *to* the poor!)

Denunciation and prayers for deliverance play a large part in the Old Testament scriptures; but there is, throughout, a spirit of hope, sometimes buoyant and confident, sometimes strained almost

to breaking-point, yet ever present. The thought of the true social order is never far away, and Israel looks forward to the Messianic Age, when justice will be established and there will be fulness of life in place of thwarted development due to the sin of men.

All this does not only belong to the pre-Christian stage of the Religion of Revelation.

The Christian Church is the inheritor of this tradition of social idealism, and is committed both to holding it and to working for its outward manifestation.

Although this is actually denied by few, it is very much in the background in the thoughts of large numbers of Christians. Yet the inclusion of the Old Testament in the Christian Bible, and the continued recitation of the Psalter by the Christian Church, bear witness to the continuity of Christian social ideals with those of the prophets and psalmists of Israel. The outlook, however, is widened out indefinitely—from being national, it has become world-wide in its scope, and the mission of Israel to the Gentiles has become the mission of the Church to the world.

§ 2.

In carrying out this mission, the Church has not always allowed the prophetic ideals to be in the background.

Without attempting any historical study of the subject, we must notice, briefly, how the Church has sought to apply this social spirit.

We must not overlook the importance and significance of that experiment, of a communistic nature, among the Jerusalem Christians which we find recorded in the Acts. But the Church was destined for greater things than this, and its real value for us is the insight which it affords into the mind of the first Christians. It shows that the social idealism of the Law and the Prophets is a permanent and essential element in the Christian Faith; so soon as the Church was founded, it at once sought to give this social idealism a practical expression.

In the succeeding centuries, through the period of the persecutions, and through the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, these ideas were not lost sight of by the Fathers of the Church, but they did not, and in the circumstances of their times they could not, deduce any political programme or economic system from their belief in "what was ideally right according to God's plan." This divinely-intentioned plan they conceived of as a free communism—a plan frustrated by the lusts of domination and avarice.

It is not until the medieval period that we find a detailed practical application of Christianity to social life—in the pages of St. Thomas Aquinas.

The following account of the teaching of St. Thomas is taken from Professor Ashley's *Economic History* :

"Throughout he assumes that everything has one definite 'just price' or 'what it is worth,' and that this can be pretty accurately ascertained.

. . . In the thirteenth century the great majority of articles in the daily use of the mass of the people were bought by the consumer from the actual maker. If the making of an article was divided between several crafts, as *e.g.* that of cloth between weavers, fullers, and dyers, each of these groups of craftsmen lived within a narrow circuit, and under the eyes of most of those who ultimately bought their manufactures. If price, therefore, was to be determined by the rule of doing to others as we would wish that others should do to us, then the maker should receive what would fairly recompense him for his labour; not what would enable him to make gain, but what would permit him to live a decent life according to the standard of comfort which public opinion recognized as appropriate to his class."

The doctrine of the sinfulness of interest was based upon that of the just price, in this way:

"To take usury for a loan of money is in itself unjust: for it is to sell what does not exist, which is an inequality, and therefore an injustice. To understand this, it must be known that there are some things whose use consists in the consuming of them, as when we consume wine by drinking it, or corn by eating it. In articles of this kind, therefore, the use of the thing must not be reckoned separately from the thing itself; he who is given the use is thereby given the thing. And accordingly in lending a thing of this kind, all the rights of ownership are handed over. If, therefore, a man wanted to sell wine and the use of the wine

apart from one another, he would be either selling the same thing twice (meaning that the use *is* the wine), or would be selling what did not exist. Wherefore he would manifestly be committing injustice and sinning. For the same reason, he would commit injustice who lent wine or corn, seeking for himself *two* rewards, the restitution of an equal amount of the article, and also a payment for its use, called usury.

“But there are some things the use of which is not in the consuming of them; thus the use of a house is to dwell in it, not to destroy it. And, accordingly, in cases of this kind the two things can be granted separately, as when a man transfers the ownership of a house to another, but reserves to himself the use of it for a certain time, or conversely. Therefore a man may lawfully receive a price for the use of a house, and besides this demand the restoration of the house itself at the end of some period agreed upon. But money, as Aristotle says in the fifth book of the *Ethics* and the first of the *Politics*, has been devised for the making of exchanges. So that the first and chief use of money is its consumption or spending. Wherefore it is in itself wrong to receive (beside the return of the money itself) a price for the *use* of the money.”

Such was the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century.

The circumstances of the twentieth century differ profoundly from those of the thirteenth. Then, there was, in Western Europe, one united

Church: now, Christians are organized in a large number of separated bodies. Then, Churchmen were the acknowledged teachers of the world in matters of social ethics as well as theology: now, owing partly to a specialization due to the complexities of our time, we look rather for guidance in these matters, if not to politicians, to sociologists and political and social thinkers who, with but few exceptions, carry on their researches without reference to religious beliefs. St. Thomas thinks of kings and princes and their subjects, and the duties of individuals in their several ranks: we think of democratic Parliaments, of political parties, of alternative lines along which future history may proceed. Important as are all these differences, even more important, perhaps, are those caused by the discovery or opening-up by Europeans of immense tracts of the earth's surface, the rise of modern capitalism and of large-scale industry built on machine-production, the world-wide network of economic interdependence, and the influence of all these upon political and social life and upon the lives and character and outlook of individuals.

In view of the completely changed circumstances, it seems plain that a mere revival of the teaching of St. Thomas could not serve the purpose of those who wish to apply Christianity to the questions of to-day. The doctrine of the Just Price, on which was based the doctrine of the Sinfulness of Usury, is, with reference to modern conditions, in the same position as the doctrine

of the Right of the Worker to the Whole Produce of his Labour—that is to say, it is partly platitudinous and partly inapplicable. Yet the importance of the doctrine can hardly be overestimated.

The teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas is important for us, not so much in the actual conclusions he comes to, as in the assumptions which he makes and the questions which he thinks should be discussed. One question which he considers may be referred to in illustration: Is it permissible in trafficking to sell an article at a price above that at which it was bought? A negative answer to this question contains a condemnation of the whole of modern commerce. Even the mere asking of the question reveals a point of view radically different from what is now the generally accepted standpoint. To most people nowadays the question would seem a ridiculous one, no answer being thought possible except an emphatic, "Why, of course; how else could business be carried on?" St. Thomas, however, evidently thinks that the proper answer is in the negative; that is to say, the thought that is really fundamental in his mind is that of the just price—the right of each to his due share, no more and no less. In other words, in fact, St. Thomas Aquinas retains the communistic tradition of the Fathers, and thus bears witness to the continuity of the true Christian social idealism with that of the prophets of Israel.

§ 3.

The Biblical and Catholic tradition may be summed up in the idea of a social order where each receives according to his needs and contributes according to his powers.

Its practical identity with the moral basis of Socialism is thus apparent.

There is thus a social ideal common to Christianity and Socialism—a City which has Justice for its foundation and Love for its law, and where liberty, equality, and fraternity are realized.

In order to explain, in a rather more concrete way, what these phrases mean, we may venture, without attempting any profound essay in moral philosophy, to elaborate them as follows:

We may explain Justice as describing an ideal relationship between individuals, and as meaning, in fact, the same as Love or Charity in the Biblical sense. But it is convenient to make use of both words and to speak of Justice as the foundation and Love as the law; for the ideal nature of this conception is often forgotten, and the contradiction of it involved in the capitalist system is still more often ignored; attempts are made to realize a superficial brotherliness within existing society; “charity” is taken to mean almsgiving and supposed to be all-sufficient, and thus becomes contrasted with Justice, as in the cry “Justice, not Charity.” For these reasons, then, we speak of Justice and also of Love, the former referring to the political and economic level of the society that is to be—the relations between individuals

created by the structure of society—the latter referring to the moral and spiritual level—the actual personal relationships.

We may connect these ideas with the phrase “Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity,” by understanding Fraternity to mean the same as Love or Charity, and Liberty and Equality to expand the meaning of Justice.

For reasons similar to those which make it convenient to speak of Justice as well as Love, it is convenient to make use of these two words Liberty and Equality, as well as Justice. For people do not always know what is good for one another, nor what the capacities of each may prove to be; and the idea of liberty emphasizes the mutual respect that we ought to have for one another’s individuality. And there is always a tendency for fraternity to limit itself to one particular race, nation, class, or other grouping; and the idea of equality emphasizes the unlimited range which fraternity ought to have. In these ways, then, the two words, Liberty and Equality, amplify and expand the meaning of Justice. But these meanings—of liberty, as individual choice, and of equality, as equal rights—will be secondary and subsidiary meanings.

Primarily and essentially, personal Liberty will mean the development of personal life out of and away from individualism into Fraternity. We may note, in passing, that a distinction may be drawn between personal and individual Liberty, the latter expression being used to describe that

nonconformity to, or wish to be independent of, law which springs, not (as the miscalled liberty of individualist anarchy) from the wish to do as one likes, but from the belief, sincere even when mistaken, that the law does not even approximate to the law of perfect Fraternity.

The word Equality has, very unfortunately, often been connected with a theory that all individuals have equal capacities. Whatever may be the case about individuals, the data are quite insufficient either for proving or disproving the equal capacities of various human stocks, whether we are thinking of classes, nations, or races. The attempts to prove the essential and permanent inferiority of particular groups appear to be nothing more than attempts to give a justification to a policy of exclusion or keeping in subjection. Similarly, the assertion of equal capacities of all human beings is a mental accompaniment of revolt or protest against such exclusion or subjection. But we can understand Equality as referring primarily and essentially to the unlimited extension which Fraternity ought to have, and to the universal applicability of the idea of personal Liberty.

In order further to explain the words Liberty and Equality, we may connect them, respectively, with the formulas—From each according to his powers, and, To each according to his needs.

But although a social idealism of this sort may be common to Socialism and to Christianity, it is, at the present time, practically in the guardianship, not of the Church, but of the Socialist Move-

ment, and its application to modern conditions, conceived of not statically, but in terms of social progress, is to be found in the Socialist programmes. This statement is made, of course, subject to certain qualifications. But I do not see how its substantial accuracy can be denied.

It is, however, one thing to see a likeness between the ideas of modern Socialism and the social idealism of the Church of the Apostles and the Fathers, and quite another thing, which by no means always follows upon the first, to give practical recognition to this likeness by adopting the principles of Socialism as being the application to the modern world of the social principles of the Christian Faith; and an unwillingness to do so, on the part of Christian people, may be accounted for in many ways. It is too often assumed, I think, that this unwillingness or refusal is due to quite unworthy reasons, to worldliness in the Church. This is true enough, no doubt, in the case of some; but it is not the opinions of these people that matter so much as the views of those who really do want a Christian civilization, but oppose Socialism especially on the grounds of its suspicion and class-bitterness towards the governing and propertied classes, and its materialism and atheism.

It will be around these two points that what follows will be grouped; and it will be contended that it is precisely these two features of modern Socialism which, if carefully attended to, should prove of real value to Christians who are studying the question of the Christian Faith and modern civilization.

CHAPTER III

CHRISTIANITY AND THE "CLASS WAR" IDEA
IN SOCIALISM

§ 1.

It is often a sign of a healthy mental development if we first accept some idea, and then, as the result of further reflection, come to modify it in various ways until at last it practically disappears within some other conception, while at the same time we find that the original phrases have a permanent value in registering a point of view and maintaining a definite outlook.

For example, a mission preacher might begin by speaking of the Way of Life and the way that tends to destruction—of Heaven and Hell; and then, after producing conviction of sin, repentance, and faith, might go on to speak of God's righteous love, His goodwill towards man, His increasing purpose with which He invites us to co-operate in the power of the risen Christ. In such a case, the thoughts of the great alternatives and of the fear of Hell, which at the first were all-important, come at the later stage almost to disappear within the greater conception of God's righteous purpose and love towards humanity; yet every devout Christian finds permanent help in the thought of the two diverging ways and the projection of them into eternity as Heaven and Hell.

Or, to take another illustration, this time from the field of economics, the doctrine of the Right of the Worker to the Whole Product of his Labour states baldly and roughly the general point of view; it is intended to express the idea that no one has the right to consume without producing. But, taken quite literally, as the right of each individual worker to the whole product of his own particular labour, the formula is inapplicable; so complex and interdependent are the processes of modern industry that it is impossible to say what is the product of any one particular worker. The same criticism holds good of groups of workers in one industry; these too are dependent upon one another. Nor is the formula beyond criticism when understood with reference to the working-class generally. For not only must the children, the infirm in mind or body, and any others permanently or temporarily unable to work, be provided for, but support must be forthcoming for all who, like schoolmasters for example, are engaged in socially useful work, but do not belong to the working-class in the conventional sense. In various ways, then, the doctrine becomes modified, until it finally becomes merged in the more comprehensive formulas, From each according to his powers, To each according to his needs. Yet the original phrase, the Right of the Worker to the Whole Product of his Labour, serves the purpose of calling attention, in an arresting and challenging way, to the truth that Socialism repudiates the assumption that it is quite right and proper that

there should be a class of people living on unearned incomes.'

Somewhat similar is the case with reference to the doctrine of the Class War.

There is an obvious antagonism of immediate material interest between those who employ men at a wage in order that, by selling the product of their labour, they may make dividends for shareholders, and those who sell their labour-power for a wage in order to acquire the means of life. This class-antagonism gives rise to the capture of political power in either interest, to the strike and the lockout—in short, to the class-struggle. If this is what is meant by the Class War, the doctrine is plainly open to certain criticisms. There are numbers of people who do not fit in very clearly on either side; this is so even if we only take account of their economic position; still more so is it if we take account of their inner consciousness and sympathies. But even if we can theoretically place everybody in one or other of two antagonistic classes, and suppose an universal class-consciousness among all the workers, this conception of the Class War is still open to criticism on Socialist grounds, for it does not provide a good preparation for the future reign of justice and brotherhood.

The Class War need not, however, be conceived of in this way; we may conceive of it as the effort to realize social justice and fraternity—in other words, as the conflict between those who wish to abolish the class-antagonism and those who wish to perpetuate exploitation. Since this effort and

conflict is carried on largely by, and always on behalf of, the proletariat, we are thus brought back to something like the class-struggle; but it is a more spiritual and fruitful idea to work on, for it is based upon and aims at an ideal fraternity, instead of being based upon class-antagonism.

The real meaning of the Class War, so understood, is that the Socialist Movement carries on a campaign or crusade or mission against social injustice. The idea of the Class War thus becomes merged into this larger idea. Yet it is of permanent value, in that it calls attention, boldly and bluntly, to the fact of exploitation and to the hopeless superficiality of any attempt to realize fraternity while accepting the class-antagonism. In short, the idea of the Class War emphasizes the distinctive position of the Socialist Movement as championing the cause of the world's disinherited against those who acquiesce in or seek to justify injustice. It is this aspect of Socialism, as based on moral principles opposed to those of the world, that ought to attract Christians.

If the Church is a society over against the world, standing for the principles of the kingdom of God in opposition to those of the kingdoms of the world, charged with the mission of converting individuals and transforming the social order; and if, as it is now beginning to be more generally recognized, Christians of all bodies have become very much compromised by association with the world, with competitive industry and competitive nationalism, with the rights of property rather

than the cause of the poor; does not Socialism provide an opportunity of making a decisive break with the errors of the past? It has already repudiated these very errors, and by its emphasis on the class-antagonism, its adoption of a proletarian standpoint, and its initiation of a revolutionary movement destined to transform the world, it proclaims principles contrary to those of the world, and displays that form of social idealism which, as we have seen, is in its essentials Biblical and Catholic, and to which the Christian Church is committed.

§ 2.

At the present time, however, in so far as there is any contact between the Church and Socialism, it is, usually, at the point where Evolutionary Socialism and Social Reform externally meet. A contact here may be, and is, valuable in several ways; but the real affinity, the really natural point of contact, is rather with Revolutionary Socialism, with the Utopian and idealist element, with the Socialist standpoint itself rather than with the details of the immediately practicable programme.

Let us examine this more fully.

Many, perhaps all, of the controversies which have occasioned divisions in Christendom are concerned with points necessarily arising in the spiritual and moral life of individuals, both as such and as members of religious and civil society. Consequently it is not surprising if they constantly reappear in all societies; and it is sometimes a help in grappling with some problem if we can think

of it as being a reappearance, in one sphere of thought, of some problem with which we are already familiar in another sphere; even if, in the instance with which we are acquainted, we do not feel we have really solved the problem, we may understand the whole matter more clearly by the parallel between the two instances.

It is both interesting and instructive to notice such parallels between questions arising in the Church and in the Socialist Movement; one such occurs in the topic with which we are now concerned.

Christians are familiar with the questions that centre round the ideas of the new birth, of regeneration, and conversion. We need not stop and introduce further complications by asking what is the test or evidence, whether we should think of baptism, or profession of the creed, or of an inner experience, or of character and good works; taking what line we think right as to these points, we may consider the question of the necessity of that which these evidence.

There are two views on the subject, which might be described as Catholic and Protestant; but both appear within Catholicism, in the Jesuit-Jansenist controversy; and both find a place (I have no doubt) within institutional Protestantism.

The one view is the more deeply spiritual, tolerant, and charitable; but is liable to lower the standard, in the interests of keeping up or extending the membership.

The other is the more vigorous and uncom-

promising; but is liable to create a self-righteous clique, carrying on a sterile mission concerning judgement and wrath upon the world.

Exactly similar is the question which we find when we turn from organized Christianity to organized Socialism; this we may see from the following paragraph in Mr. R. C. K. Ensor's *Modern Socialism* :

"A party whose programme comprises more than one reform may be impressed either with the value of doing the many things simultaneously as a system,* so that by concurrence they help each other's operation, or with that of doing them successively piecemeal, so that each paves the way for the other. Marxism, with its love of system, takes the former view; the reformists take the latter. Again, Socialism is essentially an appeal on behalf of the interests of one class, the proletarians, against what the other, the capitalists, conceive to be theirs. Socialists can either emphasize this contrast, the Class War, and rely wholly on conscious proletarian support, or they can take the line rather of reconciling the opposition in a higher unity, the Solidarity of Classes, pleading with the capitalists that they have misconceived their interest and that the true interest of all the community is that of the workers. Obviously the Class War is adapted for leading up

* This does not, of course, mean in a single "catastrophic" day or by a stroke of the pen, but it does mean by a Socialist Government which has definitely attained power and can handle its programme as a whole.—*Note by R. C. K. E.*

to the simultaneous method, and the Solidarity of Classes for carrying out the successive. As between the methods, each has pretty evident pitfalls. The revolutionary may lead to a sterile propaganda of hate; the reformist may dissipate itself in demoralizing compromises, and find all its adherents either bought off or disgusted *seriatim*."

In the instance in religious life where the question occurs, it may be difficult for us to arrive at any very definite conclusion as to the truth contained in the two views and their relative value and place—for undoubtedly each has its place, value, and truth—yet one thing is clear: the more tolerant type of Christianity, which makes ample allowance for people's circumstances, their previous ideas and habits, is the least likely to make an impression upon those who approach it from the outside; and if it has degenerated by seriously lowering the standard for the sake of numbers, it makes the worst possible impression; the other, even if it repels instead of attracting, at least appears to stand for something distinctive. In the same way, Evolutionary Socialism, and still more a Reformism which has lost its Utopian revolutionary idealism, forms the worst point of approach to Socialism from the Church; for it is Socialism clipped and modified by the opposition of the capitalist world, and, moreover, as seen from the outside, can only consist of this and that reform, without reference to the revolutionary basis. No wonder Socialism seems secular! No wonder it seems concerned only with earthly interests, with

politics and economics ! For the true point of contact is here missing—the principles upon which the Socialist programme is based. It is Revolutionary Socialism which is the vigorous and uncompromising guardian of these principles and ideals.

Here, then, we see the significance for Christians of Socialist antagonism to the “upper” classes.

It calls attention to the distinctive position of Socialism as opposed to the world with its individualism and conflicts, its absorption in money-making, its unimaginative uninspired outlook, its terrible indifference to any real planning of the world that ought to be. It is this missionary aspect of Socialism which should appeal to us Christians who are ourselves committed to a mission to the world.

Readers of these pages will now be prepared for the statement that it is the object of this volume to maintain, on the ground that the moral principles and social idealism of Christianity and of Socialism are practically identical, that the whole field of Socialist endeavour and aspiration should be brought, by Christians, within the area of their moral interest.

All will agree, I hope, that if this could be done, the force would entirely disappear from those considerations which, as we have seen, cause an indifference or even hostility to Socialism of any kind in the minds of Christians on the ground that it is a distraction from spiritual religion. Socialism would then become the result of the application

of the Christian Faith to one range of present-day circumstances. So far from being antagonistic to, it would become an expression of, spiritual life.

On these lines, the Christian Church and the Socialist Movement could come together, finding a meeting-ground in the moral enthusiasm which they shared, and working harmoniously together.

§ 3.

It is here maintained, then, that through the stimulus of Socialism, and by alliance with the Movement, the way is opened for a recovery by the Church of the Biblical and Catholic social idealism.

If we thus recover it, its controlling presence will cause us to envisage the social order against the background of man's dependence upon Nature for the means of life; we shall see the Fatherhood of God reflected in the Motherhood of Earth.

We shall spiritually identify ourselves with all who are in a worse position than ourselves, and thus obtain in our religion a proletarian standpoint such as is assumed and expressed throughout the Psalter.

In this consciousness of oneness with the submerged we shall find a perpetual stimulus. With an ever-increasing appreciation both of ideal justice and actual wrong, we shall seek to contribute, in such ways as we can, towards the building of the City which has Justice for its foundation and Love for its law.

This religio-revolutionary consciousness, as we

may call it, will give us a start on the right lines. We shall at once get freed from the too prevalent notions about property and from individualistic conceptions of justice.

These notions and conceptions, so long as they are present in the mind, form an impassable barrier in the way of the acceptance of Socialist principles. They represent a reversal of the true Catholic ideas on the subject. "The industrial world of the nineteenth century," wrote the late Professor Scott Holland, in *Property: Its Rights and Duties*, "had forgotten that there was a question as to the right of private property to exist, or as to the conditions of its origin. . . . It is this intellectual passage from the conception of private property as secondary and contingent to the conception of it as ultimate and absolute which has caused all the trouble." Unless we reverse this back again, and return to, and hold clearly, the conception of private property as being, not ultimate and absolute, but secondary and contingent, we shall find ourselves in a state of perpetual indecision; we shall talk about being "just to the rich as well as to the poor"; we shall attempt impossible tasks of balancing conflicting claims, and shall never be able to make up our minds to throw in our lot with the Socialist Movement.

But if we start on the right lines, and begin with our ideal conceptions, we possess a scale of values which illuminates the whole situation. Once we envisage organized social life as built upon the extraction, manufacture, and distribution of

Nature's gifts of the means of life, the whole capitalist structure of society appears as an altogether irrational disorder, definitely contradicting Christian principles; property at once takes its place as secondary and contingent; justice becomes an ideal conception, equivalent to the fraternity that ought to be. In this way we are brought out of a state of interminable indecision and reborn into a new mental world.

If all our thought is governed by the controlling consciousness of the social order that ought to be, we can clearly apprehend the idea of the rightness or wrongness of systems and institutions. This idea is not always an easy one to grasp so long as we approach with individualistic prepossessions in mind; but if we start on the right lines, this idea of the morality of the social order, as something distinguishable from that of individuals, falls naturally and inevitably into place. In the highly complex society of to-day this idea of the rightness or wrongness of systems and institutions is absolutely necessary. For the capitalist system distorts everything, not only industry, but also the meaning of such words and phrases as solidarity, public spirit, the common good, and so on, which we may find ourselves using to justify being partakers in other men's sins through such things as blind obedience to the State or loyalty to a sweating employer, forgetting that Christ, reigning from the tree, issues His royal commands to humanity through the needs of the poor.

This religio-revolutionary consciousness that we have been thinking of can alone save such immediately practicable action as we may take from becoming materialistic. It is a familiar thought to religious people that outward actions which have to do with material things are not necessarily, as such, materialistic; it is the motive which prompts them, and the spirit in which they are done, that determines their character. Since this is so, it often happens that when common action is agreed upon by several people, the action itself is thought of in different ways by those concerned in it; it assumes a different character in the minds of some from that which it has in the minds of others. Particularly is this the case when common action is entered upon by a body representative of all the inhabitants of a given geographical area; the nature of democratic government requires that the course decided upon be such as is acceptable or at least tolerable to people of all sorts; it thus sometimes happens that the same course of action is taken by people who are, severally, pursuing very different policies. It is necessary to remember the distinction between motive and action, and the variety of motives which prompt to the same action, if we would avoid becoming entangled in policies for which we have no mind or turned aside from policies we wish to pursue, because they are described in a manner which repels us by people who have a different standpoint from our own and for whom the course of action has a different character from that which it has for us.

All this may be illustrated with reference to the Policy of the National Minimum. A policy which aims at establishing a minimum standard in housing accommodation, in wages, in leisure, and other matters, is obviously not a policy which can only be supported by Socialists. It may be approached in more ways than one. It may be adopted by Socialists, on several grounds; one might argue, for example, that the whole programme of collectivist Socialism will not be carried out within the next few years, and that, meanwhile, here is a line of action which will secure some genuine improvements; further, one might go on to say, this policy will create traditions which will be of service later on when collectivism is brought about; finally, it might be urged, this policy is in reality not so much one of a national minimum as of a minimum standard of life within the particular nation of which its supporters are members, and is thus a part of the international advance towards Socialism.

Very different, however, is the way in which this policy may present itself to other minds. Those to whom it is essentially a part of national policy may think to themselves that if the workers are given good material conditions of life they will be content to accept a status of permanent inferiority; in this way the revolutionary movement may be bought off; besides, it is always useful, both for war and commerce, to have an efficient wage-earning class at command.

When the Policy of the National Minimum is

represented in this light, it becomes abhorrent to all genuine Socialists.

But if Socialists allow themselves to be diverted from this policy because opponents of Socialism think it may be useful to them too, they forget that, within democracy, such confusions are bound to occur; and, what is more important, they reveal that they have been attending too much to the outward acts and (to use the phrases of religion) have been looking for the kingdom of Socialism by observation when it is within.

The Policy of the National Minimum may be either a materialist one, all of a piece with competitive commerce and nationalism, or it may be an idealist one, applying the principles of Socialism to some parts of the social organization within one particular area of government. It is the motive and spirit of its supporters that gives it the one character or the other. What alone can save it from materialism is a spiritual and moral impulse.

The reformer, it has been said, is distinguished from the Socialist, not by the advocacy of reforms, but by the limitation to reforms. The distinction is thus, fundamentally, one of standpoint: to the Socialist, the reforms which he advocates are instalments of Socialism; they represent an increasing approximation to the ever-distant goal.

It is not everything that goes by the name of "reform," however, that can be viewed in this light. The capitalist world is far from unchanging; rather, by its inherent nature, it is constantly developing. But these changes and developments

which do not affect the essential nature of the capitalist system should not be called reforms, at any rate not by Socialists. It may not be very easy, in this case and that, to determine whether any particular change comes under the heading of an instalment of Socialism or that of a development of Capitalism; for the possibilities of further changes in the future are so various, the motives even of individuals are so complex, and the character of changes initiated by groups or bodies of people who do not all take up the same position are so difficult to unravel, that we may very easily lose ourselves in a fog of discussion and controversy. Yet the moral issue is always necessarily present; and the only way of keeping it always clearly in sight is to fix attention, not so much on the external action or change involved in the reform in question, as on the motive which prompts it, the spirit in which it is conceived, the end at which it aims. It is the constant presence of an idealist purpose that alone can keep reforms on the right lines. To put the matter in another way, it is the soul of the reformer, rather than the reforms, with which Christian people are mainly concerned. Thus alone can the immediately practicable actions be brought within the area of moral interest, and so brought into vital contact with religion.

This brings us to our next topic—the alleged materialism and atheism of many Socialists, and the significance of this for present-day religion.

CHAPTER IV

CHRISTIANITY AND FORMAL ATHEISM IN
SOCIALISM

§ 1.

WHEN it is stupidly affirmed that Socialism *is* atheism, what is meant, presumably, is that there is some inner logical coherence between the two. And, in fact, this is perfectly true in the sense, but only in the sense, that Socialism cannot be associated with the worship of a god who is not concerned with social justice. Such a being, however, is not the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In his *Arcady for Better for Worse*, Dr. Augustus Jessop tells us the following story, which illustrates man's instinctive revolt against a belief which involves our acquiescing in everything. The anecdote is about a clergyman who was paying a visit of condolence to a small farmer who had lost his wife and been left desolate and alone:

"The good vicar spoke such comfort as he could, and more than once insisted on the obvious truth that the ordering of 'Divine Providence' must not be murmured at, and that 'Providence' must needs be submitted to with resignation. The sorrowing farmer listened patiently and silently for some minutes. At last he could refrain no

longer, but he opened his mouth and spake, saying: 'That's right enef, that es! There ain't no use a gainsayin' on it; but somehow that there *Old Providence* hev' been agin me all along, he hev! Whoi, last year he mos' spailt my taters, and the year afore that he kinder did for my tunnips, and now he's been and got hold o' my missus! But,' he added, with a burst of heroic faith and devout assurance: 'I reckon as there's *One abev* as'll put a stopper on ha if 'a go too fur.' "

From reflection on this incident some people, perhaps, might be able to discover something about monism and dualism; but without unduly puzzling our brains over these profound questions of moral and metaphysical philosophy, we can easily see that when everything is thought of as in the presence of Eternity the thoughts of transcendent abiding reality may be liable, especially if there is an emphasis on the distinction, rather than the connection, between God and man, eternity and time, the spiritual and the material, to overshadow and dwarf and reduce almost to vanishing point the concerns of this world, even including the moral duties which properly accompany faith.

The significance for Christians of irreligion and formal atheism in Socialism is, firstly and most obviously, that of a protest against the attenuated and individualistic nature of "righteousness" as that word is too frequently understood—against the exclusion, from the sphere of religion, of a live and effective social idealism.

For, as we have seen, it really is a moral enthusiasm which lies at the heart of Socialism.

Even those who will not have any reference made to ideal principles of justice on the ground that this is unscientific Utopianism, and who assert their belief that Social Democracy will come as the result of social evolution, do not really abandon the moral basis of Socialism. For the idea that "increasing misery" and "class-consciousness" will substitute Socialism for Capitalism assumes, firstly, a discrimination between two kinds of society—that which the proletariat experience and that which they wish for; and, secondly, that the wished-for Social Democracy will control the thoughts and actions of the proletariat. If Socialists cease to criticize the capitalist world and acquiesce in everything, talking of the "historical mission" of Imperialism and Capitalism, they come to abandon their Socialism; if, on the other hand, they suppose that a revolutionary proletariat can do no wrong, then also, in another way, Socialism is abandoned.

The Movement cannot get on without constant reference to Socialist principles and idealism; it flourishes in proportion as it is penetrated and inspired by enthusiasm for the Socialist ideal society.

In this Socialist spirit we find something that is at least akin to religion, a kind of "heroic faith" that the world as it is does not represent the true and proper state of affairs, "a resolution to abide by the noblest hypothesis" as to human nature and destiny.

So, at least, it seems to some; and, for evidence on this point, the following passage may be quoted; it was written by Mr. John Trevor, the founder of the Labour Church:

“In speaking of love and comradeship, we are speaking of something more than mere abstract principles. We are speaking of real living powers, which tend to dominate material conditions whenever they show themselves. And when we speak of the source of the manifestation of those powers, we speak of the living and eternal God, who operates throughout the material universe. God pressing upon the opportunities He has Himself prepared, and manifesting Himself in constantly ascending spheres throughout the earth’s history, until a self-conscious spirit, Man, arises, capable of aspiring towards and communing with the source of his being—this is the picture that presents itself to us as we look deeply into the heart of life’s mystery.”

This, as it seems to me, is remarkably like the conception of Wisdom in Prov. viii. and elsewhere—the Divine Wisdom that is manifested in the order of nature and should be manifested in man’s social order.

There are not so many examples of this kind of writing as I should like to be able to quote; but this spirit and outlook, unexpressed, is, I think, more common than is usually recognized, and in many instances, I feel sure, only fails of expression or becomes lost because there is so little to which it can attach itself.

Mr. Trevor spoke of "the stifling dwellings of Doubt and Dogma," and endeavoured to lead people out of these into the pure atmosphere of creedless religion, any intellectual formulation of the religious spirit being counted as a purely individual matter that must not be pressed upon others' acceptance.

It may indeed be taken as axiomatic that religion cannot dispense with dogma; but it does not follow that in the case with which we are dealing the only appropriate course for Church people is to point this out and give instruction in Christian doctrine.

The rejection of dogma may largely be accounted for by the power of association; to some, dogma appears as stifling simply because it is the dogma of opponents of Socialism; but this is not all; this religious or quasi-religious spirit which exists among some Socialists and which would, I think, exist more extensively if there were more, of an institutional nature, to which it could attach itself, is significant for Church people, I suggest, in that, if carefully attended to, it may bring a fresh and healthy current into our theology and religious life.

It seems to be nearly always assumed that the soul-condition of those to whom the Church's message will come as a real Gospel—as a Word from the Living God—is one, either of feverish and despairing effort, in the conscious presence of God as Judge, to obey the law of righteousness, or else of awakening to the fact that hitherto

life has been lived on the principles (if such they may be called) of a materialistic individualism, without reference to God or any moral law. If these assumptions are made, they must, it is obvious, have a determining influence upon the whole presentment of Christian truth. But, however correct these assumptions may be in many cases, they do not always hold good. In the case of this religious or quasi-religious spirit of Socialism, they do not do so; the starting-point is different; and the message of a preacher who makes these assumptions simply does not fit; it does not answer to the felt need nor fulfil the inarticulate aspiration.

Without attempting to explore further into the particular state of mind or soul which we are considering, or into the particular aspects of Christian truth which correspond to it, we must notice, in both, an affinity to ideas other than those characteristic of what is called "Western" theology. How should these ideas be described? Should we, contrasting, say, Athanasius *On the Incarnation* with St. Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo*? speak of Greek or Eastern theology? Or, contrasting, say, Eckhart with St. Thomas Aquinas, speak of Mysticism? However that may be, the modern ideas here referred to are, like the above-mentioned types of thought, characterized by an emphasis on unity—on the likeness, rather than the contrast, between God and man; on the connection, rather than the difference, between eternity and time, the spiritual and the material; on the solidarity of man, rather than the separate-

ness of individuals; on the social order that ought to be, rather than on immediate duties within the existing conditions.

And it is worth while noticing here how it was that modern capitalism could grow up in Christendom without any open defiance of, or even very perceptible deflection from, the teaching of Aquinas. No doubt the Reformation, with its emphasis on the Bible as distinguished from Church tradition, had something, even a good deal, to do with it; but it is not Protestantism alone that is accountable; nor again, where his teaching was regarded as having almost Biblical authority, can everything be put down to the account of the ferment of that period, the Revival of Learning, the discovery of the New World, and the effects of these upon religious life. There is another factor which is of importance: the whole position of what is called "Western" Christianity is inclined to be legal, rather than prophetic; to dwell on distinctions, rather than unity; to think of this individual and that in the actual circumstances of the moment, rather than of the social order in which they live; to enquire, What should be done under these conditions? rather than, How can these conditions be altered? It is easy to see that this standpoint emphasizes the modifications necessary in any practical application of the communistic ideal; and this concessionist spirit appears in St. Thomas's answer to the question cited above, Is it lawful to sell at a profit? While he is opposed to profit-making as such and for its

own sake, he makes so many qualifications that the allowed exceptions could easily become the actual rule in practice, and the rule itself become forgotten, without anybody being acutely conscious of the momentous change.

The fresh current which may be introduced into popular Christianity will, then, be characterized by these other ideas contrasted with those of the "Western" type of thought—that is to say, by an emphasis on unity.

Of course, it is indisputable that these ideas need to be balanced or corrected by the "Western" tendency; and it is difficult to suppose that Father Tyrrell was wrong in the judgement he expressed in the last sentence of the following passage:

"The difference between Christian mysticism and that which can be realized apart from a knowledge of Christ is that the divine life which struggles in us for self-expression is now more clearly revealed as to its origin and its aim. As the life of Christ seeking an instrument of further self-manifestation in our being and faculties, its 'otherness' in our own life is more clearly defined; it is less of an unattached impersonal tendency towards righteousness; more of a personality, a will, a spirit striving with our spirit, set against our will, marking off our personality. If there may be a partial untruth in this conception of 'otherness' between God and the soul, in so far as it seems to number God with His own creatures, to view Him as a great Self among a multitude of subordinate selves, and not as that on which they

all depend, yet this error of exaggerated, or rather of an over-materialized, 'otherness' is less hurtful than the almost necessarily alternative error of attributing to our own agency that divine action which, though in us, is not of us, or from us."

But it must be remembered that the same thing may present an entirely different appearance when viewed from opposite sides; there is an immense difference between one set of ideas corrected by the antithetical conceptions and these latter corrected by the former ideas; it is only in mathematics that we can always say that $20 - 5 = 10 + 5$; and the thought with which I wish to conclude is that, if there be an untruth in these ideas we are referring to, in so far as they may seem to attribute to our own agency that divine action which, though in us, is not of us or from us, yet this error is scarcely more hurtful than an exaggerated, or rather over-materialized, "otherness" between God and the soul—and (we may add) between grace and nature, the spiritual and the material.

§ 2.

It has been remarked, with reference to "the inner harmony of the system of the Middle Age," that "the economic order found its parallel in the political order, and was even reflected in the spiritual order, and projected in the conception of another world." In the economic order, and in the political order, the medieval system has disappeared. Does this mean that Christians ought to restore the economic and political system of

the Middle Age? or does it mean that political and social democracy ought to be "projected in the conception of another world"? The former alternative is impracticable. The latter is one which we need not take literally. But in every age there ought to be an inner harmony between the formulation of the Christian Faith and the organization of the social order; and it is the ideas referred to above which provide, as I submit, the groundwork for a theological expression of religion in harmony with the social idealism of democracy.

We shall, therefore, examine very briefly the conditions upon which there can be a harmony between our religious life and our social idealism, and between this and our relation to the external ordering of society, so that all may move together and we may have a unity and coherence in the whole outlook.

It is, of course, impossible to think of all these matters at the same time; we are obliged to turn our attention now to one, now to another; but there ought to be a unity and coherence running right through, so that we feel no abrupt change in passing from religious devotion to thought about the economic arrangement of society.

As it is, these different departments or levels of thought and life can hardly get into touch with one another, much less move forward with harmonious mutual relations.

Thus (to give an example or two) one who has passed through a great crisis in his inner spiritual

life may be very unwilling to listen to any talk about the external social order; his thought is of the wickedness of the human heart, the need for and the power of divine grace; his mind is pre-occupied with these subjects, and he can hardly attend when social idealism and Socialist policies are brought before him. Or, again, one who is deeply conscious of the wrongness of the social order and striving hard to do what he can towards hastening fundamental changes in it may listen with some impatience to any word about the inadequacy of the finite and temporal to satisfy man's deepest needs; it sounds to him too much like an invitation to abandon his work for an individualistic next-worldliness. And if Socialists are told that the sinfulness of man and his need for redemption make any scientific analysis of and cure for social disorder an absurdity, in that it neglects the incalculable human factor, it is not unnatural that they should display but little interest.

The different levels of thought occupy the attention of different people, and it is not at all usual to find any easy and natural transition from one to another such as is essential if we are to have a unity and coherence in our whole outlook.

Surely the first condition of this unity and coherence is that in each department of thought the fundamental ideas and assumptions of the others should be admitted and respected.

On each level there are certain ideas and assumptions, fundamental and necessary, without the recognition of which no progress can be made.

Theology and religion are concerned with right relations with an invisible transcendent world, and assume that the soul cannot rest satisfied with the visible world, while at the same time there is a tendency in human nature for men to become preoccupied with interests lower than the spiritual life.

Social idealism goes on the idea of the actual wrongness of the social order in the light of what ought to be, and assumes that the former can and should be made to correspond more closely to our consciousness of the latter. And in Socialism there can be no scientific treatment of the subject unless the assumption is made that, speaking generally, people's actions will be largely determined by the social and economic system within which they live, while at the same time there is deep-seated in human nature a real desire for fraternity.

Let us notice here the difficulties which we get into if we fail to give recognition to the fundamental ideas and assumptions of other departments of thought.

Starting, for example, with religious ideas in mind, with intense experiences of sin and personal salvation, if we can manage to attend to the social question at all, we shall quite probably find ourselves thinking that if all is due to sin, then the sufferings of the poor are due to their sins, drink, thriftlessness, and so on. This view, however, is unsupported either by the Scriptures or the facts. In such a case, the true orientation of religion

and scale of moral values here become lost. Religion needs the freshening influence of the wider outlook, the recognition of injustice in organized public life, the insistence upon righteousness, the hope of a regenerated society. But here, again, we shall have nothing but Utopianism and ideology, unless we take account of the economic conditions of change; the social idealism which gives fresh healthiness to religion needs itself to be made healthy and effective by the scientific spirit which analyses the wrongness of society and prescribes the needful changes in economic language.

In each field, then, for healthiness and effectiveness of thought, there needs to be a recognition of the ideas and assumptions which belong to the others.

This mutual respect between the thinkers and workers in the several fields may become more general than it is at present, if, within each field, we select such phrases and terms as will facilitate an easy and natural transition from one to another. In other words, the various departments of thought often seem farther apart than they really are because the phraseology employed in each is unfamiliar in the others; but appropriate phrases and terms may be selected with a view to providing common ground, in order that we may pass, without any sense of an abrupt change of subject, from theology and religion to social idealism and moral principles, and from these again to economic analysis and constructive

programmes dealing with the external ordering of society. In this way, although we shall not be able to think of all the subjects at once, we shall find all our thought moving harmoniously together; there will be a unity and coherence in the whole outlook.

Thus, to take first the case of theology and religious language, we may think of everything, including the ideas of the Incarnation and of Redemption, in relation to, and so to speak as within, the thought of God's increasing purpose, His taking up of the finite and the visible into the infinite and invisible, of the human into the divine, His permeating of all human nature and energy and organized life with His own Life and Light and Love.

From these conceptions there naturally follows that of human society penetrated in this way by the Divine Will, the conception of an ideal fraternity; and this in turn leads us inevitably to that of its actual contradiction in the world of to-day; and these two ideas, as we have seen, are those fundamental in a moral enthusiasm about revolutionizing the social order.

From this dual consciousness of what ought to be and of what is, we get to the external ordering of society, to the realm of economics. It will help us here, and save us from being distracted by different theories about "value," and so on, if we consistently view everything against the background of man's dependence upon nature, and think of human society as built upon the extrac-

tion, manufacture, and distribution of the means of life. In this way we can reduce the whole subject-matter of economics to two topics—methods of organizing industry and methods of appropriating the product—and thus bring it all into clear and obvious relation to personal life, the former topic corresponding to individual self-expression (liberty), the latter to the needs of the individual (equality).

If we recognize in liberty and equality the conditions of fraternity, we are brought from economics to social idealism; and if we think of fraternity as the spirit of love, we are brought back again to the realm of religion.

Thus we have easy and natural transitions right through all levels of thought.

This coherence in the whole outlook is a vital necessity.

It is absolutely necessary to have this organic connection between religion and social action if we wish to avoid the gravest dangers.

Where it is absent, there is always a tendency for the two to fall apart and become antagonistic to one another. On the one side there will be those who say that it is well to attend to social questions, but they must not be emphasized excessively—religion must come first. On the other side there will be those who get more and more into the position occupied by someone who said: "I don't care whether your theology is that of the Anglican Church, or of the Roman Catholics, or of the Free Churches, so long as you believe

in the Brotherhood of Man and the Sisterhood of Woman." In either case, though there may be some friendly approach from the two sides, religion and Socialism are regarded as being, really, distractions from one another. This must always be the case, so long as there is no organic connection between the two; it will be impossible, in the long run, to hold a due balance and keep a right proportion between the two interests so long as there is not a harmony and coherence in the whole outlook. And this connection and coherence between the religious and the socialist outlook can only be secured by the fresh current of thought which we have referred to, the ideas (that is) which flow from the conception of unity.

Any attempt to bring religion and social life into vital contact without recognizing this necessity for some revision in popular theology will be fraught with disaster. So great is the contradiction between the capitalist world, with its competition and exploitation, with its ideas of property and justice, and the social ideal of Christianity, that if we try to make the world Christian, without first thinking out what we mean by "Christian," without first recovering the Biblical, Catholic, and now Socialist conception of justice, and without welcoming the influence of this on theology generally, we shall only contrive to make Christianity worldly, we shall invest the activities of the world with a supernatural sanction, and religion will be distorted, perverted, and degraded.

We turn, then, to examine somewhat more fully the reaction upon theology of this current of thought, flowing from the conception of unity, which alone can secure the necessary harmony between religious and Socialist thought.

§ 3.

The subject thus opened out is so large that we shall not be able to do more than mention the principal topics, developing under each heading one or more thoughts rather more fully.

The characteristic feature of the "Western" theology is, as we have seen, an emphasis on distinctions and differences, an attention to matters of concrete detail, rather than a comprehensive idea of God's increasing purpose. So our first topic will be that of dogmatic theology generally; and under this heading we will consider the need for a reaffirmation of the unity of God's purpose alike in His righteousness or justice and in His love.

It is the fact of sin which makes it seem as though there were some antagonism between the two, and that the Christian Gospel offers us an escape from God's justice into His love.

That such an antagonism could ever have been supposed to exist is, in the realm of pure theology, a serious matter; and it is a misconception which does great harm to some minds; but it might not, perhaps, be of very great consequence for the devotional and practical life, did it not carry with it a perversion of that idea which is expressed in the doctrines of redemption, atonement, and

justification by faith. When these doctrines are thought of with the presupposition in mind that God's love in Christ somehow cancels or annuls His justice, then the idea is lost sight of that redemption, atonement, and justification by faith usher us into a life in harmony with the righteous purpose of God for man; the whole outlook tends to become vitiated, religion to be de-ethicized, and vital concern for the welfare of future generations to be thrust on one side.

Closely connected with this thought is the old question about the Gospel and the gospels.

Are we to say, with Dr. Dale, that Christ did not come to preach the Gospel, but that there might be a Gospel to preach, and that this was preached by the Apostles, as we find from the Acts and the Epistles? Or are we to say that the true Gospel is in the gospels, the proclamation of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, the word of the Heavenly Kingdom that is to come on earth?

From this latter standpoint, how much like an encumbrance of "dogma" does any Gospel about Christ appear! How thin and inadequate, from the other standpoint, does a Gospel appear which is limited only to the declaration of the coming Kingdom of Heaven! Is this the only message to sinful, suffering, dying humanity? And besides, will this ideal for the future of the world ever soften hearts that have grown hard in the service of Mammon?

Plainly, the theological interpretation and doc-

trine, the Gospel about Christ, the preaching of the Cross, is needed too. But we must be careful to avoid saying, or seeming to say, that since the Law and the Prophets did not produce righteousness, something else, other and different, was needed. Is it not written that those who hear not Moses and the Prophets will not be persuaded though one rose from the dead? To a sinful and adulterous generation no sign was given, except the sign of the temple of Christ's body, destroyed and in three days raised up again, the purpose of this sign being to reinforce the prophetic ethic with a new power and to lift it up into the realm of the eternal; all the social idealism of Moses and the Prophets is retained, and who shall not hear them now that the message comes through the preaching of the Cross? Who shall not find comfort now that for all sorts and conditions there is the comradeship and the compassion, the co-suffering, of Jesus? Who shall grow weary in hope now that all progress is the extending influence of the perfect social life already given us in Christ's infinite Person?

What is required is that the Gospel of Christ crucified should be so preached as, not to destroy, but to fulfil the Law and the Prophets; not to be an alternative to, but the inspiring motive of, effort to realize that social ideal to which the Church is committed.

Reference was made above to the communistic quality which once belonged to Christian social ideals. There are minds that have a natural

affinity with ideas of this kind, and by nature have the thought (without being told by St. Ambrose) that "God has ordered all things to be produced, so that there should be food in common to all, and that the earth should be a common possession for all: Nature, therefore, has produced a common right for all, but greed has made it a right for a few." But, to those who have this mentality, many questions soon present themselves: Can there be no justice, can no one get right either with God or man, unless the whole human race actually adopts Communism? And when and where is this Utopia to be realized—at some future date in the world's history, or only in a world beyond the grave?

These questions were answered in one way or another by those who, in earlier days, maintained this communistic quality in their social ideals. But our imaginative outlook to-day is not the same; all our thought is permeated by evolutionary ideas.

Surely the way out of all the difficulties suggested by these questions is to be found in the Johannine conception of eternal life.

The social character of eternal life as uniting us together in Christ is constantly obscured by a form of devotion to our Lord which emphasizes too much the distinction between individuals; but it becomes clear when we remember the all-inclusive nature of His Personality.

As already risen with Christ and possessing eternal life in Him, we are already inheritors of

the Kingdom of Heaven and citizens of the City of God. The communistic quality which belongs to the conception of the Kingdom or City becomes apparent when we remember that Christ is the Origin, not only of spiritual life in mankind, but of all things that have any existence; man's common dependence upon Nature is the earthly counterpart of man's spiritual oneness in Christ.

Since eternal life does not properly belong to time and space, the contrast between a future world and the future of the world becomes resolved into the distinction between two elements in eternal life—faith and love.

Righteousness is thus faith in, and alliance with, God's purpose; it is the laying of ourselves open to, and the effort to extend, Christ's increasing influence upon humanity; it is the continual approximation towards a complete conformity of actual society to the perfect social life revealed through the Incarnation.

But if it is necessary to consider these theological matters, it is no less necessary to consider certain points connected with the doctrine of the sacraments and the nature and function of the Church.

The ideas of the corporate nature of the Church, of Churchmanship as Church-membership, and of the sacraments as a bond of union, may, indeed, produce a social, as contrasted with an individualistic, type of Churchmanship; but they do not by any means necessarily create a Churchmanship which is fruitful in any kind of social, still less in Socialist, effort on behalf of society in general;

they may, in fact, be very detrimental, tending to create a strong sense of Church-membership which ousts from consciousness any sense of secular citizenship and responsibility with reference to it.

This is, in part, due to those theological matters which we have already touched upon. For example, in the showing forth of the death of Christ, the thoughts of atonement and propitiation have obscured, if not obliterated, the thought of the passion of Jesus as the Martyr-prophet in the cause of God's righteousness. Again, the statement in the *Epistle of Barnabas* that if we are fellow-sharers in things spiritual we ought to be so in things temporal as well, and Mr. Stewart Headlam's paraphrase, "Those who come to the Holy Communion ought to be holy communists," sounds odd to most of us because our ideas about the means of grace have little connection with our ideas about the distribution of the means of life.

Thus there is also a question about our sacramental beliefs. Ideas such as the last mentioned do not fit in very well with any type of sacramental teaching that is being widely given to-day; they demand a sacramentalism of a kind which may be indicated by calling it Maurician rather than Tractarian—that is to say, one which makes a great deal more than is usually done of the significance naturally inherent in bread and wine, and asserts this significance to be, not destroyed, but fulfilled by the consecration and by a belief in the Real Presence.

The idea of communion as common-union in the means of life, both spiritual and temporal, through man's dependence upon Nature and upon God, at once sets us free from the old controversies about Sacrifice or Communion, by revealing their intimate and necessary connection, and relates the worship of the Church more closely to the common life of the world.

Our last topic is that of the obligations of individuals, as seen in the light of the foregoing ideas.

I was once told by a Socialist friend that Christian Socialists were individualists. His meaning was that, even among these Christians, everything was considered, not with reference to the question, What is the form which society should be made to assume ? but always with reference to the characters and duties of individuals.

There is a sense in which the thought in his mind involves no accusation of individualism, and indeed no criticism at all, being necessarily applicable to people of all kinds. For if we have some preconceived idea as to what ought to be, the question must arise as to what we should do. Shall we try to work out in detail what the result would be of our ideas being carried out ? Or shall we say that that belongs to a later stage, and that the first thing is to win many more adherents for our point of view ? Taking this line, we might consider different methods of propaganda, and of acquiring effective power; or else, without looking ahead so much, we might inquire, instead, how in

the existing circumstances we can do what is possible to act on our ideas. So that in the end it all comes back to the question of the individual function and duty. But there is no individualism; for everything is thought of as within and conditioned by the controlling consciousness of the cause believed in, of the idea of what ought to be. What creates individualism is the absence of this controlling consciousness.

Hitherto, Christian ethics have been mostly considered under the form of the duties appropriate to the several offices which individuals may fill. This is the traditional way of looking at the matter, and it is still constantly followed. Thus we have people thinking about the duties of employers, and of workers, the responsibilities of property-owners, and so on. But it sounds, sometimes, as though this catalogue were going on to include the shareholder, the financier, the company-promoter, the collector of rack-rents in a slum area, the owner of wayleaves, the sweater, and the profiteer. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that this way of thinking of the whole subject needs revision; there is no thought of the dynamic nature of society, of continual change, of guiding these changes in the right direction; there is no vigorous idealism; everything moves in a pedestrian manner. The whole outlook is a static one, for the thought is that a Christian civilization has already been reached. It is assumed that practically any and every position which any individual may hold in actual society is consistent with Christian prin-

ciples. But if we think in this way, we forget that there is no end yet in sight to progress towards the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. It is a commonplace of the religious world that it is always necessary to have the missionary spirit; but this does not apply only with reference to belief and the inner life of the soul—it applies also with reference to the external ordering of society. If it is fatal to true religion not to be a missionary at heart, it is, therefore, fatal to abandon the Church's mission to Christianize civilization. In every age there must be those who are not content to accept the contemporary social order, but are urged forward by an inner compulsion to change the social order; there must be a minority who are the guardians of the new ideals and the pioneers of a new age.

For those who have this religio-revolutionary consciousness, the fundamental thought will be that of the City or Kingdom of God, to which already we belong by faith, having our citizenship in heaven, while yet we look to the future, hoping and working for its ever more complete and more extensive outward expression. We shall, in fact, take up a missionary or propagandist position, such as we find not only among modern Socialists, but also in the pages both of the Old and the New Testament.

When we turn to the New Testament we find, it is true, a number of passages in St. Paul's writings and elsewhere where exhortation is given to various classes of people—masters, slaves, and

so on. But these are of illustrative and suggestive rather than positive value; for the conditions of those days are entirely different from those of our own; nor are these passages really typical and characteristic of the Gospel spirit; far more so, and far more valuable for the present day, are those more general phrases which abound in the New Testament, such as those in which believers are exhorted to walk worthy of the Gospel of Christ or to live as befits those who are risen with Christ and in Him.

Such phrases as these express the general idea that Christians belong to, and in the spirit have already entered, a heavenly social order, while their lives should bear witness to this and be instrumental in extending its outward manifestation.

As we noticed earlier, everything comes back to the question of the individual witness or function.

Every kind of position which people may take up may be said to fall under one of four heads. There are, at one extreme, those who frankly accept the world as it is; at the other extreme are those who think it so hopeless that they frankly abandon all attempt to influence it for good. Neither of these positions, of course, is Christian. Between them are two others, differentiated by the amount of concession or adaptation that is made: those who take up the one position always have ready some immediately practicable alternative to the present way of going on; those who take up the other have not, and are content with dis-

seminating ideas. Of course, these positions cannot be actually marked off from one another with precision; but the above classification represents familiar and recognized distinctions. We have, in fact, already come across them, in our discussion of evolutionary and revolutionary Socialism, which we distinguished as being, respectively, practical or administrative and propagandist or missionary.

It is, then, within these categories that it is here suggested that we should view the question of the duties of individuals. On these lines, we shall not take as our basis the attempt to formulate an up-to-date casuistry suited to modern conditions, laying down the several duties of employers and employed, or landlords and tenants, and so on; we shall, instead, take as our basis the consciousness of the contrast between the social order which we believe in and that in which we actually live; everything will be determined by this fundamental thought; there will thus be no individualism; but the question of individual character and duty, of individual responsibility, will loom large; and the question will be, How best can I help to transform the actual social order? How can I bear effective witness to the heavenly citizenship? The answers to these questions will fall into two groups variously described as above.

Unless we adopt these categories we run the gravest risk of stereotyping the conditions of to-day.

CHAPTER V

LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

§ 1.

So far in these pages we have made much use of phrases like "the new social order," and so on. But little has been said of what these phrases more definitely mean.

This is because the essential point with which we have been dealing is that the moral basis and ideals of Socialism are practically identical with those of Christianity. For this purpose, it was sufficient to use the word Socialism in this vaguer sense—anti-thetically to Individualism—as meaning fundamentally those moral principles which the Christian Faith and the Socialist Movement have in common.

Yet constant reference has been made, as just now, to the organized Movement, where (of course) the word is used in a much more definite way. This use of the word is very much apt to put off many who might otherwise call themselves "Socialists"; and the question may be asked whether it was really necessary to attach this more definite meaning; whether it would not have done as well, and in fact have been better, to limit the word Socialism to the abstract principle, without dragging in anything about its application in the sphere of economics or about the organized Movement.

More reasons than one may be put forward for attaching this more definite meaning to the word.

The two paths which at present seem most attractive to Christian people who take up with any ideas of this kind at all are those of a very abstract idealism and an equally concrete reformism. But both these paths are extremely dangerous.

The former, because it does not face the facts, never gets to grips with the situation; it debases the currency of moral language, by reiterating such phrases as the Brotherhood of Man without realizing how completely the whole structure of capitalist society contradicts this principle; and this leads, with some, to a contemptuous impatience with all abstract moral principles and an exclusive emphasis on the economic factor, or else, with others, to disillusionment and vexation of spirit.

The latter path—that of a very concrete reformism—is equally dangerous. Having no very definite hold on the conception of an ideal social order, it tries to Christianize the existing one without making any fundamental changes in it, and this can only lead to a real perversion and distortion of religion.

Both these points have been touched on above, and we have seen that the way out of these difficulties is to be found in a recovery of the true Christian social idealism; it is necessary to view the whole existing situation in the light of this conception. In this way we are freed from the dangers of mere reformism. At the same time, we can avoid the dangers of Utopianism by viewing the present also in relation to the past and the future, recognizing that while we work for the future we cannot escape the heritage of the past.

This scientific spirit and attitude necessitates a minority position. Such a position, of course, is habitually taken up by Socialists, who think of the Movement as the guardian in the world of to-day of the new order that is to be. But this position and point of view is not very widespread among Christian people, except with reference to Missions in non-Christian countries; yet it is essential here, too, with reference to the application of Christian principles to the external ordering of society.

Thus the emphasis on the connection between Socialism as a moral principle and the organized Socialist Movement serves to call attention to this scientific and minority position.

It also calls attention to the real place and value of economic determinism and the true significance of the materialistic interpretation of history. It is the function of religion to create the spiritual conditions of a regenerated social order, but there are other conditions; and these economic conditions, intimately bound up with psychological, moral, and spiritual conditions, must not be lost sight of. If some Socialists pay too much attention to them, many Christians heed them too little.

But, apart from these reasons for so closely associating the economic programme with the idealist basis, it is really necessary to do so, because, as a matter of fact, there is no alternative to Capitalism other than Socialism. Justification for this statement must be sought elsewhere, and the reader is referred to the Reports of a committee of the Fabian Research Department on the Control of Industry. At the same time, it is not suggested

that there ought to be a blind following of Socialist theories and policies.

The *essential* meaning of Socialism we shall still take to be the moral basis, all else being *incidental*. On these lines we shall value the Socialist analysis of society, as giving a definiteness to our ideas which they would otherwise lack. But we need not be too anxious to define exactly the precise meaning of every word we use. It was suggested above, in connection with the idea of the Class War, that the real meaning and value of the idea is that it registers a point of view, emphasizes the proletarian standpoint, and the antagonism of Socialists to the capitalist system, while it need not, and indeed must not, be taken too rigidly and literally. This does not apply in the same way, it need hardly be said, to all Socialist ideas and terms, such as the attitude to Rent, Interest, and Profit, or the Wage-System, and so on; yet the thought is worth bearing in mind that the special phraseology gives an analysis and diagnosis of what is wrong in the social order, and points the way to the Co-operative Commonwealth, and that the essential thing is the recognition of this wrongness and the effort to correct it, all else being subsidiary. Endless questions arise about definitions; and these interminable and rather barren controversies can be avoided if, while viewing the matter in the definite and concrete way which these terms imply, we hold fast throughout to our two ideas of liberty—from each according to his powers—and equality—to each according to his needs.

This way of looking at things may seem deplorably vague to some Socialists.

Yet it is probable that this aspect of Socialism as being essentially something spiritual and moral and incidentally economic will, as time goes on, come more into prominence. For, true as it may be that Capitalism is doomed, and that it has now entered upon the last stages of its era, many difficulties, delays, and disappointments await Socialists. The capture of political power makes it necessary to face the forces of reaction in a very near-at-hand and concrete and disillusioning way. And there come times when all the strength and patience which only a moral enthusiasm can supply is called into play.

Moreover, there is no room for doubt but that it will become increasingly clear that the International Socialist Movement cannot aim at anything less than the capture of political power on a scale equal to the extent of the capitalist system—that is to say, it will become recognized, far more generally and more realistically than hitherto, that Socialism cannot be established within the bounds of one nation, that the Socialist State can be no smaller than the realm of Capitalism. But in addition to this, there is the question of those regions of the world which are still in the primitive pre-capitalist stage or in the early stages of capitalist exploitation, but which are associated, imperially, with nations in a highly developed stage of capitalist industry; the capture of political power in one of these nations would force attention to the meaning of Socialism with reference to such

regions. The application of Socialist principles would necessarily work out in such cases somewhat differently from the way Socialists are accustomed to in the highly industrialized countries. This will, no doubt, itself accentuate the Socialist principles as being the essence of Socialism, the same everywhere, though differently applied. But in addition these thoughts suggest, what is in a way already recognized, that the Socialist state really requires the whole world for its proper expression. To talk of the World-State appears to many minds equivalent to making Socialism entirely Utopian and divorced from actuality. But I do not see how the facts of the situation can allow us to avoid setting our faces definitely towards the Socialist World-State.

All these considerations might well produce a feeling akin to despair, so far distant does such a goal appear, if we are thinking merely of the external advance; in that case we might begin to ask whether it was really worth while troubling at all. But if we are thinking of the Socialist Movement as an expression of man's innate desire for justice (more of the *ἐνέργεια* than the *ἔργον*, as some might put it), we shall find nothing to disconcert us in these thoughts, least of all if we are Christians, accustomed to think of the world-wide scope of Christ's coming kingdom.

§ 2.

It would be quite beyond the purpose of these pages (needless to say) to attempt any description in detail of this imagined Socialist world, or even to discuss questions of Socialist policy. Nevertheless, something must be said on these subjects.

Socialism has often been described, in summary fashion, as the nationalization of the means of production. But it is only very inadequately that it is so described. For, in the first place, nationalization which is prompted simply by a desire for efficiency and so on hardly deserves to be called Socialist, however useful it may be: much valuable progress in collectivism may be made prior to the capture of political power by Socialists; but this latter is the condition of a collectivism or nationalization which has a Socialist character. But apart from that point there are other inadequacies in the description of Socialism as nationalization. Some measure of producers' control, for instance, is evidently necessary. This, again, suggests the idea of some organized method of determining and registering the needs of consumers with reference to the different kinds of goods and services. Quite as important as either of these matters is an increasing approximation towards equality in the appropriation, by individuals, of the available resources. Moreover, the phrase "nationalization" only refers to one kind of area, leaving out of account some that are smaller, as, for example, the municipality, and others that are larger. It assumes, too, or suggests, that one area is always to be adopted for all purposes; but this need not be so. There are already in existence examples of inter-municipalization which only refer to waterworks or some other particular purpose; and this principle is capable of great extension. Looking into the Socialist future, we may think of collectivism, not only in contiguous areas, but

in overlapping areas for different purposes, ranging from parochialization for the baths and wash-houses to internationalization for the trans-continental railways.

This brief outline may serve to give body to the Socialist idea which we have been considering in its relation to the Christian Faith.

The means of its realization can only be touched on in an equally brief manner.

Approaching the whole subject as we do here, not as a matter of political and social philosophy, nor as a controversy about politics, but as a means of Christianizing the social order, we are concerned with the moral issues which present themselves more than with anything else. Accordingly there is no occasion here to discuss all the many questions which arise as to the real meaning and implications of Democracy, as to Parliament and Soviet, as to Dictatorship, as to the capture of political power and direct action, and other similar points of discussion and division. We are concerned, essentially, with the duties of individuals as the guardians of the ideal social order, with the expression of the Socialist spirit. In the case of all these controversies we come sooner or later to the question, How far should the external advance towards Socialism in legislation and in the forms of social organization wait upon, and how far precede, the ripeness of psychological conditions among the people concerned? In other words, what are the respective limits of toleration and coercion? Or, to put it in another way, how far should one adapt oneself to circumstances by making con-

cessions, or refuse to do so, seeking rather to change the circumstances either by bringing effective pressure to bear or by exhibiting the witness of passive resistance ?

We have already seen how, in the end, everything comes back to the question of the individual function or vocation. On this subject, considered in relation to the progress of the Socialist Movement, the following thoughts may be offered.

Is there not room within the whole Movement for individuals of the most diverse types and capacities, with very different contributions to make, such as (for example) sociological thinkers, students of the past and the present, exponents of theory, propagandists of ideas, organizers, and administrators ? If so, will not a hearty recognition of this save us from a good deal of unnecessary disputing ?

Similarly, may we not escape a good deal of indecision, distraction, rivalry, and impatience by recognizing the need for an advance, equally rapid, so far as possible, both along all lines of advance and in all countries ?

Again, can we not avoid the pitfalls both of an excessive revolutionism and an excessive evolutionism if we recognize that there ought to be, so far as possible, an equally rapid advance in the revolution in people's heads and the external process of change in the social order, and that when one outruns the other it makes for catastrophe ?

§ 3.

Our essential thesis has been that, so far from there being any necessary antagonism between the

Christian Faith with its world-wide mission and the Social Revolutionary Movement, the latter provides a body prepared for the social idealism inherent in the former.

Just as Israel was not only a Church, but a Church-Nation, so the New Israel, the true People of God, ought to be a universal society or civilization penetrated through and through in all its organized life by the spirit of the Christian Religion. This was the meaning of Christendom in earlier centuries; and this thought of a really Christian Civilization constitutes the attraction of the Middle Ages, however little it may actually have been realized. "What appeals to us," writes Mr. H. W. C. Davis, "in the medieval outlook upon life is, first, the idea of mankind as a brotherhood transcending racial and political divisions, united in a common quest for truth, filled with the spirit of mutual charity and mutual helpfulness, and endowed with a higher will and wisdom than that of the individuals who belong to it; secondly, a profound belief in the superiority of right over might, of spirit over matter, of the eternal interests of humanity over the ambitions and the passions of the passing hour."

At the present time many Christian people are conscious of our divisions and look for reunion. But to speak of the reunion of "the Churches" as the reunion of Christendom is to use the latter word in a very limited sense. In order to restore Christendom we must have not only a united Church, but a Church which is the soul of a Christian civilization.

This prospect may be remote enough. But that

is no reason why we should not set our faces towards it. To refuse to do so is, in fact, to acquiesce, not only in the divisions between the various Christian bodies, but also in the failure of religion and morals to control society. This failure is, surely, partly the cause and partly the result of divisions in the Church; and a reunion which makes no attempt to correct this failure would be scarcely worth the having, and perhaps cannot be obtained; for it may be that we shall never get away either from the divisions which separate Christians or from our complicity with the world unless we resolutely set ourselves towards Christendom in this full sense, and make this aim condition our whole outlook and action.

We cannot here attempt any discussion of the questions which occasion controversies between the Christian bodies. But if the suggestion has been rightly put forward that the assimilation of Socialist thought by Christian people throws a fresh light on Christian theology and religious life, it is obvious that our subject has some bearing on the matter. If any considerable number of adherents of differing religious bodies agree, and give effect to their agreement by mutual assistance and collaboration in work of a Socialist nature, it will necessarily have a unifying influence.

Without pursuing this topic further now, we cannot help seeing that if it is true that Socialism recalls the true Christian social idealism, and if Christian people are becoming more and more dissatisfied and uneasy about the anti-Christian characteristics of modern civilization, it is possible

that an increasing number of Christians may be drawn together through a common assimilation of the Socialist spirit.

Let us notice the natural affinity which there is between the Socialist International and the Catholic Church.

The propagandist nature of the one corresponds to the missionary character of the other; the internationalism of Socialism answers to the world-wide Catholicity of the Christian Religion; the proletarian standpoint of the former recalls not only the standpoint of the psalmists and prophets of Israel, but the whole Biblical and Catholic tradition on riches and poverty; Socialist opposition to capitalist society is parallel to the heavenly citizenship with which Christianity confronts the kingdoms of the world. To substitute, as Socialists wish to do, the co-operation of public authorities in order to secure justice in distribution in place of the competition of individuals or groups in order to secure gain, is to embody in the social order the Christian principles of service and love.

There is, unfortunately, another similarity. The Socialist International and the Catholic Church are both divided into separate bodies; and here again there is a likeness, for in both there is the desire for unity.

In view of the facts of the actual situation, the contention of these pages may seem hopelessly visionary; yet there are not a few whose hope it is that Christianity and Socialism will go forward together to the conquest of the world.

But any Christian who wishes to make common

cause with the Socialists soon finds himself in a difficulty. Where is he to find that common consciousness, that comradeship in the cause, which is an almost necessary condition of protracted effort? As a Churchman, he is a member of an organization of which the majority ignore or oppose Socialism; as a Socialist, he is a member of an organization of which the majority ignore or oppose the Church; he is distracted between (as one might say) "Church-consciousness" and "class-consciousness."

I venture, therefore, to offer here a few thoughts which may, perhaps, prove useful to any who experience this difficulty, and which may also, perhaps, make it easier for others to help them by joining in with them; but what I have to suggest will provide, not so much a way of escape from these difficult circumstances, as an encouragement to persevere in spite of them.

When considering the subject of the Sacraments, we had occasion to notice the idea of Christian worship being necessarily in vital relation with the common life of the world. Following out this line of thought, we see that, in the Divine intention, the Church represents, and by anticipation includes, the whole of humanity: in her Psalms, she utters the cry of the poor and needy; in her penitential Litanies, she asks deliverance from the sin of the world which has made it the scene of oppression and conflict; in her Eucharists, she represents the Sacrifice of Christ, thus renewing our sense not only of the ideal unity of mankind in Him, but also of the triumphant, yet painful, path to its

realization. "Church-consciousness" and "class-consciousness" thus merge into one another; or rather become the consciousness of membership in the human race, divided by sin, united in Christ.

If there is to be an understanding leading to active co-operation between Christians and Socialists, the basis of it can be no other than the possession of a common social ideal.

The recognized formula of International Socialism—"Religion is an individual matter"—is one which is sometimes criticized; and if it is understood to mean that the Socialist Movement officially makes the dogmatic pronouncement that none but individualistic religion is the genuine article, it is indeed a curious assertion. But it does not mean this. Surely the sense of it may be expanded somewhat as follows: "In our organization we ask no questions about religious beliefs; we welcome into our ranks people of any creed or of none; if you find in your religious beliefs a motive and stimulus for Socialist work, and if by means of them you can appeal to others, well and good; but though this may be so for you as an individual or as a Church member, you must be willing to rub shoulders with Socialists who hold other beliefs or disbeliefs." Understood in this way, the formula fits in perfectly with the plan of co-operation between the Church and Socialism on the basis of a common ideal of social justice.

Ought it to be very shocking to Christian people that the Biblical and Catholic tradition of social justice is now practically in the guardianship, not of the Churches, but of the Socialists? The

notion of a Church which has a monopoly of what is good and right is a separatist one; and the separatists *par excellence* were the Pharisees. The antecedents of this sect of the Jews are interesting; it was a continuation of the Hasidæans, who adopted as their party-name a word which means "Those on whom rests the lovingkindness of Jehovah"—that is to say, in particular, those who being thus penetrated by the Divine favour show forth lovingkindness to others, in contrast to the high-handed oppressors of the poor; this conception of the *hasidim*, before it hardened into a party-name, we may see (for example) in Psalm xii., where the word occurs in verse 1 and is translated "godly" in the English version. We also find it in Psalm lxxxvi., verse 2 ("godly," R.V.; "holy," A.V. and P.B.V.), where the meaning is "One of 'God's poor.'" In this conception we have, allowing for difference of circumstances, an almost exact parallel to what I tried to describe above, a combination in one of "Church-consciousness" and "class-consciousness." The subsequent developments from this early conception are a warning against separatism of all sorts, in every kind of group or party or organization, and in a manner illustrate the aphorism, "The idea creates the institution, the institution crushes the idea." And where shall we find a surer safeguard against these dangers than in such a widespreading sense of solidarity as will foster within us an abiding penitence for the sin of the world?

HX
51
.B56

Binyon, Gilbert Clive.

The Christian faith and the social
revolution / by the Rev. Gilbert
Binyon. -- London : Society for
promoting Christian knowledge; New York
: Macmillan, 1921.
vi, 88 p. ; 19 cm.

1. Socialism, Christian. I. Title.

A31366

